

the recession of the past two years provides a very good reason why we have not had an opportunity until now to address the question of financially needy students. But having come so far, let us not fail in our initial test to give these students and their families an opportunity to be considered for support. In 1982 a survey was done by the Postsecondary Education Coordinating Commission to determine the size of the gap between students' ability to pay and the charges they must bear at higher education institutions. Using a methodology developed by officials at the University of Nebraska it was found that there is a gap of approximately \$15 million and that figure is conservative between the costs and the ability to pay. The way this figure was arrived at was to subtract family contributions and all other forms of student financial aid from total need. It is most interesting to see in which higher education sector students and their families have the most need. At the University of Nebraska the 1982 figure was approximately \$4.1 million, at Nebraska state colleges approximately \$800,000, and at the technical community colleges approximately \$2,200,000, and at the independent colleges and universities approximately \$7.7 million. But let me say to make it clear for all my colleagues, the funds put into this program will not be divided up by sector as all Nebraska undergraduate students will have the same opportunity to apply for whatever aid is made available regardless of their college of choice. Most of the funds no doubt will float those students who attend our public higher education institutions. But putting funds into this program will also enable students at our independent colleges and universities to receive assistance. Virtually all the states in the country, including those which border Nebraska, except Wyoming which has no independent colleges, have seen fit to provide some assistance of this nature. The issue before us today is not a question of public versus the private sector in higher education. The University of Nebraska, for example, has endorsed and has worked for passage of the Scholarship Program and supports funding this year for the student financial aid bill. Funding to support the constitutional tests of the program was contributed from both private and public higher education supporters. The reason for this is that tuition has been going up at most if